

REMARKS

In the Final Office Action¹, the Examiner:

- a) rejected claims 1-3, 6, 10-14, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Watanabe et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,461,942);
- b) rejected claim 4 under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watanabe et al. in view of Miyamoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,342,434);
- c) allowed claims 7-9, 15-19, and 21-25; and
- d) objected to claim 5 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 5, 7-9, 15-19, and 21-25.

By this amendment, Applicants propose to cancel claims 1-4, 6, 10-14, and 20, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof, and amend claim 5 in independent form to include all of the limitations of claims 2 and 4. Upon entry of this Amendment After Final, claims 5, 7-9, 15-19, and 21-25 will remain pending in the above-captioned patent application.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1-3, 6, 10-14, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Watanabe et al., and the rejection of claim 4 under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watanabe et al. in view of Miyamoto et al. In order to expedite prosecution of this application, however, Applicants have canceled claims 1-4, 6, 10-14, and 20, thereby rendering these rejections moot.

¹ The Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statement of characterization in the Office Action.

In addition, as noted above, Applicants have amended objected to claim 5 to be in independent form. Accordingly, each of pending claims 5, 7-9, 15-19, and 21-25 is allowable.

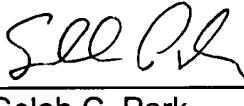
Applicants submit that this Amendment After Final does not raise new issues requiring further consideration or search, but places this application in condition for allowance. Entry of this Amendment and a timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance are earnestly requested.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 
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